

Remarks

Applicants request entry of the above amendments to better place the claims in condition for allowance, or to reduce the issues on appeal.

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, and of the amendment to the Title of the Invention and the remarks set forth in the preceding Reply to the Final Office Action submitted on March 9, 2004, favorable reconsideration of the outstanding office action is respectfully requested.

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the telephone interview with the undersigned on April 1, 2004, in which the Advisory Action mailed on March 24, 2004 was discussed and during which the Examiner clarified that the Reply to the Final Office Action (with enclosures) submitted on March 9, 2004 overcame not only the double patenting and rejections based on U.S. 6,477,305 (as stated in item #3 in the Advisory Action), but the Reply to the Final Office Action also overcame the provisional rejection of claims 1-5, 7-10, 12-16, and 39-54 as being obvious over co-pending applications in view of Burrus. The Examiner also indicated that an amendment incorporating claim 4 into claim 1 would be allowable in accordance with the Advisory Action on page 2 under "Continuation of 10".

Claim 9 has been amended to incorporate the suggestion of the Examiner as set forth in the Final Office Action.

Claims 42-48 are canceled without prejudice.

Claim 49 has been amended to incorporate the suggestion of the Examiner as set forth in the Final Office Action.

Claims 5, 39 and 40 have been amended to depend from Claim 1, as Claim 4 has been canceled without prejudice.

Claims 1-5, 7-10, 12-16, 39-41 and 49-54 remain in this application. Claims 6, 11, 36, and 37 have previously been canceled without prejudice. Claims 42-48 are currently canceled without prejudice. Claims 17 – 35 and 38 have previously been withdrawn from consideration, without prejudice.

In the Advisory Action on page 2, under Continuation of 5, the Patent Office states that the prior art reasonably suggest that all glass objects be deuterated, and that the teaching that OH diffusion causes problems is sufficient to apply the prior art teaching of removing all sources of contamination.

Applicants respectfully traverse. Applicants strenuously maintain that the cited references do not reasonably suggest that all glass objects be deuterated. Specifically, Shang and Burrus together only teach deuteration of (a) gases used as starting material for forming glass that eventually makes up drawn optical fiber and (b) glass rods or tubes that are drawn and make up the drawn optical fiber. Shang and Burrus teach removing OH contamination from material that makes up the fiber. Neither Shang nor Burrus teach removing OH contamination from material that does not make up the fiber. Neither Shang nor Burrus disclose inserting a glass body or plug, deuterated or not, into a soot body, and neither Shang nor Burrus disclose depositing soot onto a tubular handle, deuterated or not. Furthermore, neither Berkey, nor Shang, nor Burrus contains even a suggestion of deuterating a tubular handle or of deuterating a plug for inserting into a soot body. Accordingly, Applicants submit that impermissible hindsight would be required to arrive at the present invention from the cited references.

Conclusion

Based upon the above amendments, remarks, and papers of record, Applicant believes the pending claims of the above-captioned application are in allowable form and patentable over the prior art of record. Applicant respectfully requests a prompt Notice of Allowance thereon.

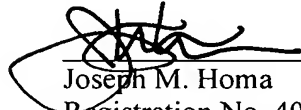
Applicant respectfully requests that the Office grant such time extension pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) as necessary to make this Reply timely, and hereby authorizes the Office to charge any necessary fee or surcharge with respect to said time extension to the deposit account of the undersigned firm of attorneys, Deposit Account 03-3325.

Please direct any questions or comments to Joseph M. Homa at 607-974-9061.

Respectfully submitted,

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Registered Representative



Signature

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